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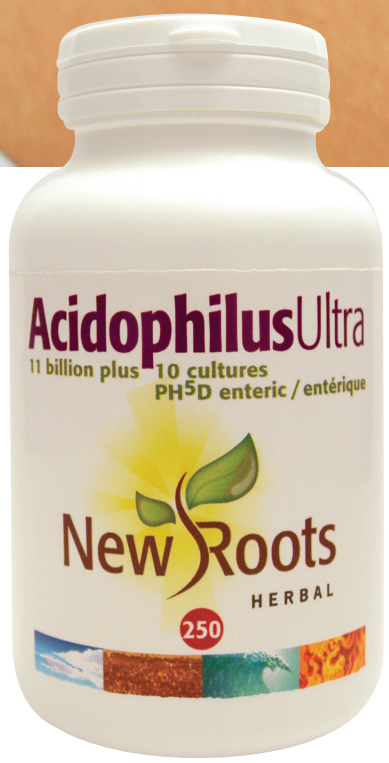
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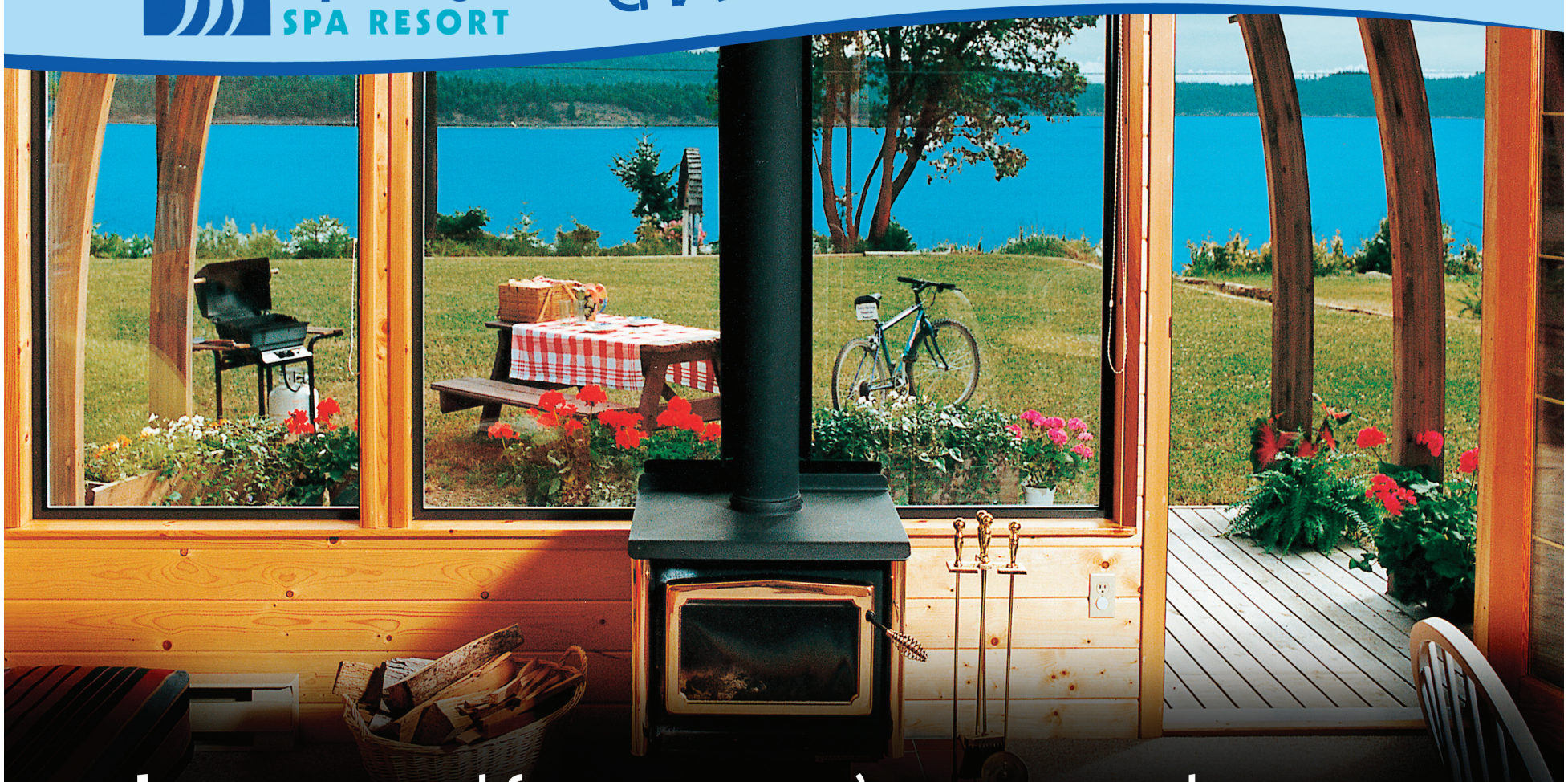
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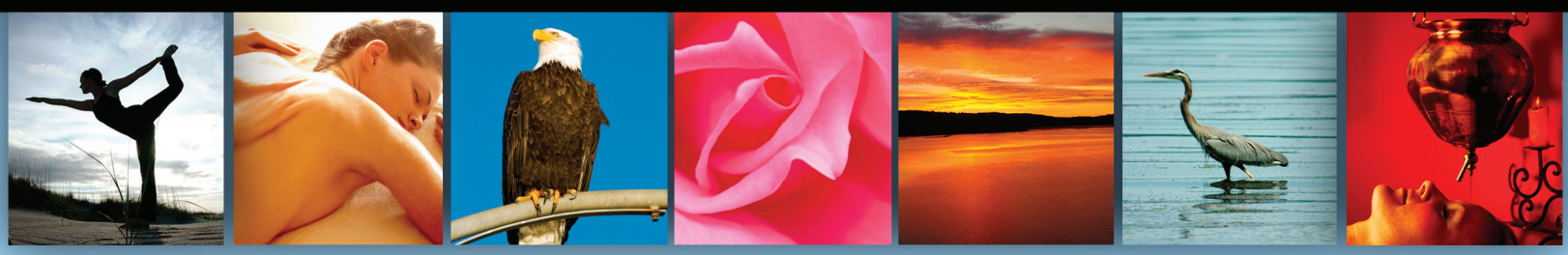
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Contributors:
Robert Alstead, Celia Brauer, Alan Cassels, Guy Dauncey, Adrien Dilon, Earthsave Canada volunteers & staff, Carolyn Herriot, Vesanto Melina, Drew Nofle, Don Ollsin, Geoff Olson, Gwen Randall-Young, Joseph Roberts, David Suzuki, Eckhart Tolle

Sales - Head office 604-733-2215
toll-free 1-800-365-8897

Contact Common Ground:
Phone: **604-733-2215**
Fax: 604-733-4415
Advertising: admin@commonground.ca
Editorial: editor@commonground.ca

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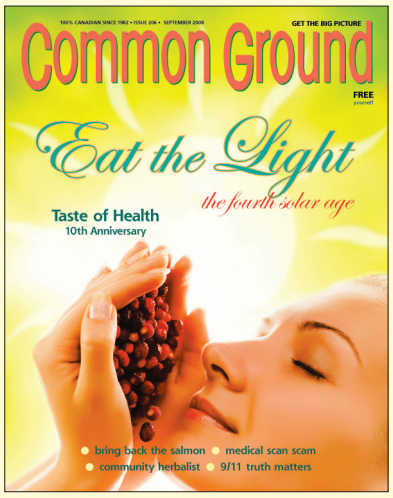
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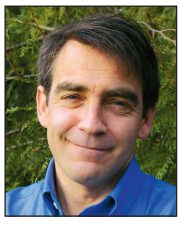
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DRUG BUST

Alan Cassels

Medical scan scam

HEALTH

Seek and ye shall find. We can find disease wherever we look; the question is do we need to be looking? One of the longest-running debates in health care circles involves the dichotomy of "prevention" versus "treatment." Some people complain that our "health" system has nothing to do with health and basically exists to patch you up once you're broken. It's a system that, by design, ignores many of the factors that make us sick in the first place. Many people praise the need for prevention using very compelling arguments, stressing that the bucks need to go towards health promotion and disease prevention in order to save further billions on medical services down the road. This would avoid much needless suffering and engender a healthier, happier society at a fraction of the cost we currently incur.

There's no doubt that, as a society, we need to do a better job of following the classic triumvirate of health promotion advice: Eat well. Exercise often. Don't smoke. However, that which passes for prevention is often an exercise in consumerism to get us to part with even more of our dollars. All in the name of health, of course.

We've seen many examples of how "prevention" consumerism drives the use of pharmaceutical drugs prescribed to "prevent" all kinds of chronic disease, even when the evidence underlying those treatments really applies to only a small subset of "high risk" people who may benefit. The incessant drumbeat of preventative pharmacology persistently fails to remind us that many of those treatments provide infinitesimally small benefits for relatively healthy people at great costs with unknown risks.

The pharmaceutical industry is not alone in discovering that prevention sells. Others, particularly those that market organ screening with some of the highest tech tools on the planet, such as the CT (computed tomography) or PET (positron emission tomography) scanning machines, have discovered that screening for disease is a cash cow capable of providing a much more lucrative revenue stream than that yielded by simply providing treatments for the sick.

In fact, one way to sell "prevention" is to establish a market for screening for the deadliest diseases lurking in your body – seeking out markers of disease, such as heart disease or cancer, before the disease can get you.

This new generation of scanning devices wouldn't look out of place in Dr. McCoy's sickbay on the Starship Enterprise. These space-age devices generate three-dimensional images of your body's insides and, in terms of diagnosing what is wrong with you, a CT or PET scan might be the best medicine for you. But, at the same time, because these machines are so good at detecting tumours and arterial plaque, entrepreneurs would naturally reason that we should grow that market by expanding the machines' uses to more and more healthy people. In fact, why not send the whole population to get "screened," under the guise that it would (like most arguments for prevention) ultimately save the health system money?

It's not that simple. Population-wide screening of healthy people seems intuitively sound until you look a little closer and realize the costs and potential for harm are considerable, including, in this case, the massive doses of radiation that some of the tests themselves deliver.

What do we really know about the overall screening of the population using these devices? The answer is not much. And it provides no solace that even the screening paradigm about which we know the most – screening mammography for breast cancer – is no slam-dunk. Maryann Napoli, associate director of the Centre for Medical Consumers in Manhattan (www.medicalconsumers.org), has an in-depth consumer's view of the controversies around mammography. In a recent interview, she shared some of the statistics with me: "For every 2,000 women who have mammography over the course of 10 years, one woman will have her life extended because she was saved from having or dying from breast cancer. Meanwhile, 10 more women will be diagnosed and treated for a cancer that they didn't need to know about."

The fact is the more mammography screening you do, the more things you'll find. And the more stuff you find, the more you will be driven to determine if the lumps are lethal, beginning a cascade



of biopsies, surgery, radiation, hormone therapy and so on. Any screening, if pursued too aggressively in well people, will deliver high rates of false positives – the equivalent of crying wolf. One of the surprising findings of mammography screening research, despite our profound belief in its usefulness, is that breast cancer death rates don't vary, regardless of whether or not you religiously have mammograms or avoid them. The equation tilts in favour of older women being more rigorous about mammography, but then why do we still recommend screening so aggressively for younger women?

Cancers don't just show up in the breast, and around the world, private entrepreneurs with scanning machines are promoting their high-tech search and destroy missions in hearts, lungs and other organs. In Canada, these scans seem to be currently limited to those who can plunk down the fee of several thousand dollars, unless you're a CEO and you get the screen as a perk of "executive health" coverage. The promotion of these types of screenings tend to use a predictable technique designed to grab your attention: 1) the hook –sell the size of the problem. 2) the set-up – sell the wonders of the technology. 3) the pitch – and then close the deal by asking the customer to commit to some action.

The following two examples derive from a centre in a large, western Canadian city pitching its screens for lung cancer, heart disease, and other conditions.

Lung cancer screening

1. The hook: "The Lung Scan – The Best Defence is a Good Offence"

2. The setup: The most preventable of all cancers, lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women.

3. The pitch: After quitting smoking, early detection may be your best defence against lung cancer. Researchers have recently demonstrated that routine CT screening reveals most lung cancers while they are potentially curable.

4. The close: The lung scan is very accurate in detecting small lung cancers before they become symptomatic or before they become visible on standard chest X-rays. Early detection of lung cancers can mean a longer life and, in many cases, a cure.

Heart Disease

1. The hook: "The Heart Scan – Know the Score"

2. The setup: Cardiovascular disease is the single greatest health problem in Canada and the rest of the developed world. Health Canada suggests 37 percent of Canadian men and 41 percent of women will eventually die of some form of cardiovascular disease.

3. The pitch: A heart scan is an "effective, non-invasive way to measure the amount of calcified plaque in blood vessels – your 'cardiac calcium score.' Once identified, at-risk patients can be treated for problems such as high blood pressure, cholesterol pathology and borderline diabetes, significantly improving their chances of survival."

4. The close: "Starting at age 45 for men and 55 for women, individuals should consider a heart scan to determine their calcified plaque levels."

So there you have it – all the reasons why you should be proactive. There is this disease – lung cancer or heart disease – that is a huge killer. You could be at risk. The technology could save you. And luckily for you, you can act now (and pay the thousands of dollars your scan will cost you). And the narrative flows to the point where you are willing to part with your money.

By now, you would probably like to ask me, "So what's wrong with paying a few thousand dollars to find out if your body is harbouring any latent disease?" One way to answer this question is by asking yourself what matters to you.

Does it matter that a single CT scan could expose you to as much radiation as 300 chest x-rays, which, statistically, will *cause* cancer in a small number of patients thus exposed?

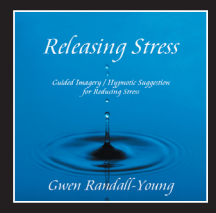
Does it matter to you if the World Health Organization, as well as almost every federal agency in Canada and the US and many radiology societies and associations around the world, gives the thumbs down to population screening of asymptomatic (healthy people) for coronary artery disease or lung cancer using CT scans? In other words, for a variety of reasons, the experts don't recommend it.

Does it matter that the language used to sell many types of population screening is prone to many forms of bias? Three types of bias – lead-time, length time and overdiagnosis bias – collectively conspire to make the screening appear to improve your chances of survival when it actually doesn't? (Check Wikipedia for a good explanation of the types of possible bias.)

Does it matter that many of us who are healthy are harbouring slow-growing tumours and other moles, lumps and bits inside our bodies that we don't know about and which may never bother us, yet, if those things were to be discovered, the medical cascade of investigations, biopsies and surgeries (as well as complications arising from hospitalization and surgery) would tend to follow?

Let me conclude by saying that while we all hope that high tech, such as CT or PET screening, saves lives, it's worth waiting for the evidence to back up that hope. In the meantime, it's buyer beware; watch for the hook and beware of those ready to "close" the deal.

Alan Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher at the University of Victoria and is the author of The ABCs of Disease Mongering. *He is currently studying the marketing and regulation of private scanning in Canada. Have you been scanned? Do you have a story to tell? Contact him: cassels@uvic.ca*

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Sample a Taste of Health

NUTRISPEAK Vesanto Melina MS, RD

Vancouver's healthy food festival, Taste of Health, has become a welcome September tradition. It's a fun, inexpensive way for families to spend a day or weekend. It's also a great way for vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike to sample healthy foods and discover how small, dietary changes will impact climate change.

Earthsave Canada's 10th annual food festival includes cooking demonstrations, seminars and a veggie food court. Visitors can hear informative lectures, ask questions of food experts, attend demos, sample tasty foods and browse the book fair.

Speakers include cattle rancher turned vegan activist Howard Lyman (www.madcowboy.com); David Pimentel, professor of ecology and agriculture at Cornell University; Brenda Davis, RD, a dietitian and my co-author (www.brendadavisrd.com) and I'll be there too so please come by and say hello.

The following authors will give cooking demonstrations: Rose Vasile (www.rawrose.com), Victoria Laine (www.healthbychocolatebook.com), Dreena Burton (www.everydayvegan.com) and Nyala's restaurateur Assefa Kebede (www.nyala.com).

Here are summaries of my and Brenda Davis' presentations:

Rx for Healthy Eating

Vesanto Melina

Did your medical doctor give you a prescription for healthy eating? Would you like to live an extra 10 vibrant years? Can food be good for you and also be delicious and easy to prepare? How do you cope when some of your dear ones are vegetarian, vegan or eat raw foods while others can't imagine a meal without meat? In this presentation, you'll learn simple tips for preparing meals and snacks throughout the day. You'll learn to keep your blood sugar level and your energy high. You'll get ideas for feeding children, grandchildren and spouses food that will tickle their fancies and tingle their taste buds. You'll discover how to fare well at restaurants and while travelling.

The Raw Revolution Diet

Vesanto Melina

A trend that is sweeping North America is the raw foods movement. Some people are motivated to go raw by a concern about bulging waistlines, others by the abundance of protective antioxidants and phytochemicals in raw plant foods. Are raw diets nutritionally adequate? If so, what does a day's intake look like? How do we create a raw menu that meets recommended intakes for protein, calcium, iron, zinc, vitamins B12 and D? Is it okay to be partly raw, rather than 100 percent? Can a raw diet be the basis for a successful weight loss plan?

Cutting Edge Vegetarian Nutrition

Brenda Davis

There is no more powerful tool than your own example of great health. While there is overwhelming evidence that a vegetarian or near-vegetarian diet is as healthy as you can get, plant-based diets are not foolproof. This presentation will guide you through common concerns and questions about plant-based diets and provide you with authoritative answers and detailed information on protein, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B12 and essential fatty acids. Learn about the far-reaching benefits of a vegetarian diet.

Defeating Diabetes – lessons from the Marshall Islands

Brenda Davis

Type 2 diabetes is sweeping North America. Once primarily a disease affecting people over age 45, it is now common among young adults and increasing numbers of teens and children. Though often believed to follow a downhill spiral, research demonstrates that the disease is highly treatable and, in some cases, completely reversible. The author of the best-seller *Defeating Diabetes* will guide you through the reversal diet and lifestyle and provide tools to improve, and possibly defeat, your disease. Brenda Davis brings her experience of working on diabetes reversal in the Marshall Islands, where nearly half of those over 35 years of age are affected. Her story is riveting and inspiring. Don't miss this presentation.

Vesanto Melina is a dietitian and author of nutrition classics Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegan, Raising Vegetarian Children, *the* Food Allergy Survival Guide *and the new* Raw Revolution Diet. *She does personal consultations from her Langley office. 604-882-6782, www.nutrispeak.com*

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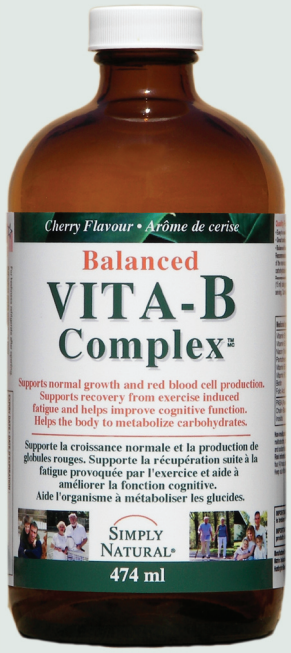
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HEALTH

Herbalists who put people and plants first

by Don Ollsin

The energy that actually shapes the world springs from emotions. – George Orwell

My first herb walk was with a four-year-old on a farm in California. He led my wife and me on a walk and showed us about 20 plants. Because this child lived with these plants, he knew them intimately; this is the way it was traditionally.

I like the traditional idea of village and folk herbalists. A community herbalist uses more of a folk approach, which means a more heartfelt approach and a focus on the inter-connection between the plants, the person and the environment. A community herbalist is primarily interested in the people, the plants, the gardens and the animals. This speaks of a healing path with heart.

Allopathic medicine attempts to copy nature, trying to figure out which chemicals are in which plants and then copying them and creating a patent. A top CEO of one of the six major pharmaceutical companies earns $250,000,000 a year. That's fine. It's a body of knowledge and it's useful, but it's a little too economically focused. Community herbalists look more at the energetics of herbs – whether they're heating you or cooling you down, whether they're drying you out or providing moisture. At one time, community healers would visit people in their homes. In my practice, I've found that if I go to somebody's home, it's a whole different story than if they come to my office.

Community oriented healing is primarily focused on the spiritual and emotional needs of the person or community. Traditionally, the village herbalist was the shaman, someone in tune not only with the plants and body, but also with the spirits or energies of the bodies, places and plants. Their healing practices involved much more than the traditional, allopathic "treat the symptom" approach. It could be that they held someone while they wept, and they might give the person Bach flower remedies for their emotions. My philosophy of healing has always been to "treat the person, not the disease."



Community herbalists are deeply immersed in the plant community. They know which plants can help and which ones are to be avoided. They know the basic needs of the body and the things that commonly go wrong with the body, especially in the communities in which they live. I see people growing the herbs they need to stay healthy and happy. I see community gardens where communities can collect the herbs they need. In Fernwood where I live, we have such a garden; it has stinging nettle and milk thistle, plants not normally found in community gardens. Both, however, can be used as food and are powerful healers.

In the Pacific Northwest we have a tendency toward coughs and colds throughout the winter. A community herbalist would be aware of which plants to grow and use for various common conditions. They would advise people how to use them safely and make them aware of any contraindications so that a pregnant woman, for example, wouldn't take something that might jeopardize her pregnancy. They would encourage people to take herbal baths and use herbal poultices. If you look at many of the traditional systems, such as Ayurveda, there's a good deal of hands-on work. I think our bodies are hungry for more physical contact with the plants and the earth. It feels wonderful to soak your tired feet in a basin of hot water that has a bouquet of herbs in it. It's much more satisfying than merely swallowing a pill.

The idea of paradigms – the way we perceive something – is also very important. Many of the traditional methods, which I consider as community herbalism, work on an energetic model more than a chemical model of medicine. It involves practitioners being trained to work in their villages and the areas in which they live, on how to gather and use the local plants.

My vision for community herbalists is that we would have herb specialists, well trained in and connected to the plants that can be grown in their communities. I like the image of barefoot doctors, rather than white-coat clad doctors, walking in the community with the knowledge and skills to help people. They could visit you in your home or they could meet you at the coffee shop or in the park. They can listen to you and offer sound advice. It is not expected that they can solve every health problem you have, but in my experience, sometimes just listening to somebody is often a great help. Tools such as Bach flower remedies or simple herbal remedies for relaxation can complement any other therapy someone is undergoing, whether or not it's medical. Everyone needs a healer, someone to support them. Community herbalists also work in the retail setting. Many people visit retail stores seeking help for a cough or a cold. Much healing is done over the counter. My vision for community herbalists is to give them a sense of power and place within our communities.

I also believe that the practice of community herbalism will carry on from the tradition of the elders I've studied with: Norma Meyers, a Mohawk medicine woman who has passed over to the other side; Dr. John Christopher, the herbalist who turned so many of us on to herbs in the '60s and early '70s. (The American Herbalists Guild is full of herbalists who originally studied with Dr. John Christopher.); Ellen White, a Coast Salish native elder from the Nanaimo band and one of my teachers. She celebrates her 86th birthday on September 13. The idea is to keep that tradition and knowledge alive. The native tradition was much more in keeping with the practice of a community herbalist. The people knew the plants intimately. They knew the spirits. They knew the energies. They knew the songs. They knew the ceremonies. My vision is to bring those aspects back into healing.

We no longer have ceremonies. Everyone goes through changes, but we have nothing to offer people to mark their changes and accomplishments. We have no rites of passage. My wife and I have done very powerful rites of passage work with young people and I have done ceremonies for people who have had major losses or upsets. I am also working with Royal Roads University and First Nations elders throughout BC on non-timber forest products, and we've established protection for medicinal plants in logging contracts. Again, that's the idea of a community herbalist. It's not just about the herbs in a clinical practice; it's also about the herbs in your back yard and the herbs in the forests. It's about the herbs in the community.

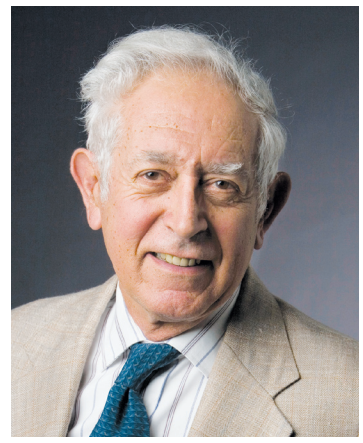
I also see education as a huge part of being a community herbalist – taking people from the community on herb walks, visiting people's gardens and advising them which plants to grow for their health. Hopefully, community herbalists will be able to establish herb gardens in schools so kids can learn from an early age. In England, people can enrol in a four-year herbal program at a university, after which they receive a Bachelor of Science. I envision that being available in BC in the very near future.

If you are interested in becoming a community herbalist, contact Don Ollsin at 1-866-592-7523 or email don@herbalhealingpathway.com www.herbalhealingpathway.com

TASTE *of* Health celebrates 10 years

by staff & volunteers at
Earthsave Canada







Lto R: **Dr. Neal Barnard, Erik Marcus, Dr. David Pimentel, Dr. Jonathan Balcombe**

Over the past 10 years, Earthsave Canada has been privileged to host many brilliant and internationally renowned speakers, who have helped further our mission of promoting a shift towards a healthier, plant-based diet. We often hear from attendees that these talks were life-changing events, catalysts for their own shift towards greater health and an environmentally friendly and compassionate lifestyle. We are honoured to have played a small role in their transformation.

Mark your calendars for Taste of Health's special 10th anniversary September 25, 26 and 27 at the Croatian Cultural Centre on Commercial Drive. For more information, visit http://tasteofhealth.earthsave.ca.

The following retrospective honours some of the inspiring speakers at the Taste of Health event over the last decade. May it give you a taste of the brilliance you can expect at this year's gala and show. We look forward to seeing you there.

1999: Erik Marcus, author of *Meat Market*

"The typical North American diet puts us at war with animals, the environment, and even our own bodies."

As publisher of Vegan.com, over the past decade Erik Marcus has spent the bulk of his time researching society's food choices. In 1999, Marcus was invited to speak at Earthsave Canada's Taste of Health event. While he was clearly at odds with the conventional wisdom of the time, subsequent developments have pushed it into the mainstream. At the 1999 event, Marcus made the following points: 1) Animals should not be factory farmed. 2) Meat, milk and eggs should be eaten rarely, if at all. 3) The most compassionate and sustainable diet does away with these foods entirely.

2000: Ingrid Newkirk, PETA founder and president

"It matters to me. I don't know why; I didn't choose it. It might be just purely that I can imagine myself going through exactly what they're going through. And I want to stop it."

She's tough. She's fearless. She's driven. She's a brilliant strategist. She's perhaps the most famous animal rights activist in the world. Ingrid Newkirk is cofounder and president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the largest animal rights organization in the world with more than two million members and supporters.

2001: Brendan Brazier, author of *Thrive*

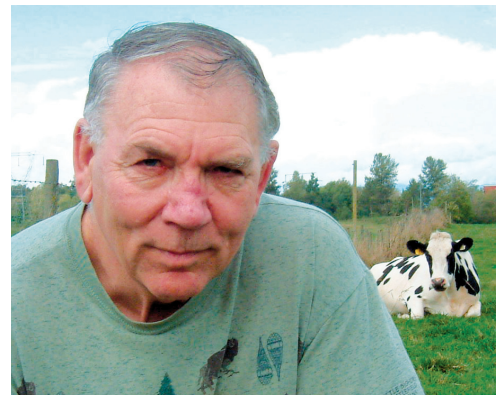
"Throughout the last 14 years I have learned how to perform at a high level in one of the world's most demanding sports, while exclusively on a plant-based diet."

Brendan Brazier is one of only a few professional athletes in the world whose diet is 100 percent plant-based. He's a professional Ironman triathlete, bestselling author on performance nutrition and the creator of an award-winning line of whole food nutritional products called Vega. He is also a two-time Canadian 50km Ultra Marathon Champion.

2002: John Robbins, author of *Diet for a New America*

"A reduction in meat consumption is probably the most potent single act individuals can take in the effort to halt the destruction of the environment and preserve our precious resources."

In 1987, John Robbins launched the EarthSave Foundation in the US following overwhelming response to his book *Diet for a New America*. Earthsave Canada grew out of the excitement generated by John's presentation in Vancouver in 1989. Widely considered to be one of the world's leading experts on the dietary link between the environment and health, John is an international speaker and has frequently appeared on US television shows such as *Oprah*, *Donahue* and *Geraldo*. The standing ovation John received at the UN is a testament to his powerful, dynamic message.



Howard Lyman

2003: Dr. Neal Barnard, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

"More deaths have been caused by bad diets than by auto accidents, natural disasters and all the wars of the past century combined."

Neal Barnard, M.D., is one of North America's leading advocates for health, nutrition and higher standards in research. He has been the principal investigator or co-investigator on several clinical trials investigating the effects of diet on health. He is president and founder of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, which promotes preventative medicine through innovative programs.

continued p.31...





Seeds the future of food

ON THE GARDEN PATH Carolyn Herriot

Since the dawn of agriculture, edible plants that thrive in the bioregion in which they grow have been domesticated through plant breeding. Traditionally, local farmers were the stewards of these seeds, passing them on from harvest to harvest. Knowledge garnered over 10,000 years meant farmers were well qualified to select seeds of plants with the most desirable traits, such as high yield, drought tolerance and disease resistance. These "landrace" varieties were passed on from one generation to the next. At the dawn of the 21st century, the situation looks radically different.

Ninety-eight percent of the world's food seed sales are now in the hands of six corporations: Monsanto, Syngenta, DuPont, Mitsui, Aventis and Dow. While Monsanto is not in the business of feeding the world, it conducts most of its research in a living laboratory – farmers' fields throughout the world. This corporation's business is the genetic modification of seeds, which have to be sold in a package just like their pesticide products, such as Roundup. In order to control these GMOs, Monsanto has patented its seeds and, even more alarmingly, is now trying to sterilize them through proposed terminator technology. Monsanto's objective is seemingly to control the way the world feeds itself, but it appears that its methods are not sustainable on many fronts. We are now seeing the impact of mass quantities of food being flown around the world, while people working the fields go hungry and the planet warms up. Cheap food is costing the Earth!

Our ancestors recognized food as the staff of life; without seeds there is no agriculture to grow food, and without agriculture, there is no civilization. It's incredible that across the planet people have become so disconnected to the source of their food, the very essence of their survival.

How can we accept that we are feeding the world with food grown in the absence of nature? There's no place for wildlife on hundreds of acres of monocultured crops. There's no habitat, food or water for the birds, bees and butterflies. What happens to the fragile soil-food web of life when the soil is dosed with Roundup? It's time to reconnect with nature by finding a place for Her in the food production cycle.

Plants are dependent for their nutritional content on the soil in which they grow. Fertile soil is alive with organic matter, which feeds the myriad organisms that dwell within it. What kind of food is being grown through industrialized food production? Is it real food that nourishes us? We are now seeing the consequences of eating food grown in depleted soils, or no soil at all (as with hydroponics): neurological problems such as dementia in the elderly and attention deficit disorder in youth.

When fed empty calories, we always feel hungry. When we eat too much, we create Type 11 diabetes in children and obesity throughout the populations of developed and developing nations. Our healthcare systems will soon be bankrupt through the necessity of caring for a society of undernourished people.

Perhaps it's time for a resurgence of the '60s hippies' "back to the land" movement. Perhaps if we grow real food where we live, we will reconnect with nature. Perhaps all we need to do is go back to the garden to remember how to feed ourselves and future generations. But we need the seeds to do that.

Around the world, many small groups of seed savers are actively working to safeguard global food security by preserving the genetic diversity of plants. Our capacity to feed ourselves in the future depends on defending our global, agricultural heritage today. Grassroots organizations are saving the seeds in a living laboratory by growing heritage varieties of food plants whose seeds have not been genetically altered or hybridized in the interests of large scale industrialized food production. (See sidebar.)

Carolyn Herriot is author of A Year on the Garden Path: A 52-Week Organic Gardening Guide. *She grows her certified organic "Seeds of Victoria" at The Garden Path Centre (www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath) where she blogs The New Victory Garden online. (www.gardenwise.ca)*

Grassroots Seed Savers

Salt Spring Seed Sanctuary
http://www.saltspringseeds.com/catalog/seedsanctuary.htm

Seeds of Diversity Canada Resource List
http://www.seeds.ca/rl/rl.php

Seed Savers Exchange USA
http://www.seedsavers.org/

The Heritage Seed Library – UK
http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/hsl/

Digger's Club – Australia
http://www.diggers.com.au/

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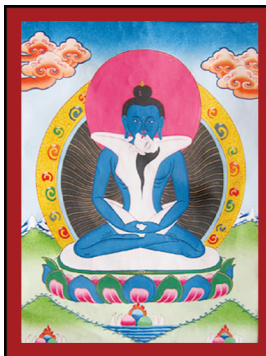


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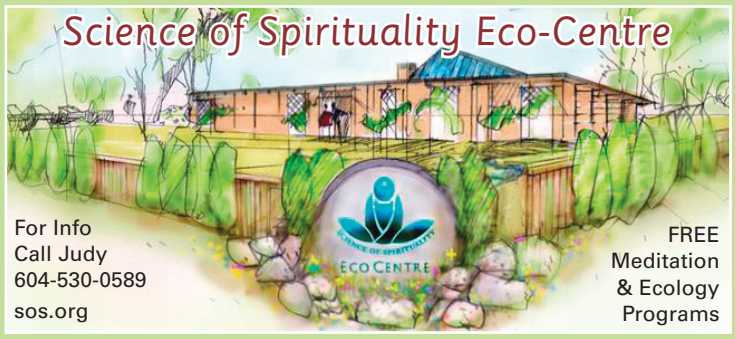
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The light of the world

THE POWER OF NOW Eckhart Tolle

When you are fully present and people around you manifest unconscious behavior, you won't feel the need to react to it, so you don't give it any reality. Your peace is so vast and deep that anything that is not peace disappears into it as if it had never existed. This breaks the karmic cycle of action and reaction. Animals, trees and flowers will feel your peace and respond to it.

You teach through being, through demonstrating the peace of God. You become the "light of the world," an emanation of pure consciousness and so you eliminate suffering on the level of cause. You eliminate unconsciousness from the world.

This doesn't mean that you may not also teach through doing – for example, by pointing out how to dis-identify from the mind, recognize unconscious patterns within oneself and so on. But who you are is always a more vital teaching and a more powerful transformer of the world than what you say and more essential even than what you do.

Furthermore, to recognize the primacy of Being and thus work on the level of cause does not exclude the possibility that your compassion may simultaneously manifest on the level of doing, and in effect, by alleviating suffering whenever you come across it. When a hungry person asks you for bread and you have some, you will give it. But as you give the bread, even though your interaction may only be very brief, what really matters is this moment of shared Being, of which the bread is only a symbol. A deep healing takes place within it. In that moment, there is no giver, no receiver.

But there shouldn't be any hunger and starvation in the first place. How can we create a better world without tackling evils such as hunger and violence first?

All evils are the effect of unconsciousness. You can alleviate the effects of unconsciousness, but you cannot eliminate them unless you eliminate their cause. True change happens within, not without.

If you feel called upon to alleviate suffering in the world, that is a very noble thing to do, but remember not to focus exclusively on the outer. Otherwise, you will encounter frustration and despair. Without a profound change in human consciousness, the world's suffering is a bottomless pit. So don't let your compassion become one-sided.

Empathy with someone else's pain or lack and a desire to help must be balanced with a deeper realization of the eternal nature of all life and the ultimate illusion of all pain. Then let your peace flow into whatever you do and you will be working on the levels of effect and cause simultaneously.

Empathy with someone else's pain or lack and a desire to help must be balanced with a deeper realization of the eternal nature of all life and the ultimate illusion of all pain. Then let your peace flow into whatever you do and you will be working on the levels of effect and cause simultaneously.

Raise awareness by disseminating information, or, at the very least, practise passive resistance. But make sure that you carry no resistance within, no hatred, no negativity. "Love your enemies," Jesus said, which, of course, means have no enemies.

Once you get involved in working on the level of effect, it is all too easy to lose yourself in it. Stay alert and very, very present. The causal level must remain your primary focus, the teaching of enlightenment your main purpose and peace your most precious gift to the world.

Adapted from The Power of Now, *copyright 1999 by Eckhart Tolle. Reprinted with permission of New World Library, Novato, CA. 800-972-6657. Visit www.eckharttolle.com*



Loving from soul

UNIVERSE WITHIN Gwen Randall-Young

SPIRITUALITY

Love begins at home and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put in that action. – Mother Teresa

Love is a very pure form of energy but when filtered through the prism of ego, it can become distorted and even contaminated. While great harm has been done in the name of love, it had nothing to do with love.

Love is the ultimate energy of the universe. It is like a sun that always shines and we can choose to bask in it or we can go inward to a place of darkness and shadows. When ego chooses darkness, it blames others for lack of love, which is like going into a windowless basement on a sunny day and complaining of the lack of light.

When we connect with our higher soul selves and see the souls of others, the quality and experience of love becomes quite different. To love another is to want what is in their highest good.

In relationships, what we call love might well be lust, neediness or dependency coupled with affection, rather than a high form of unconditional love, characterized by acceptance, compassion, forgiveness and a sense of the eternal.

For ego, love is very different than the love soul knows. Ego gives itself broad powers when it loves, including unlimited expectations, a need to control, manipulation and withdrawal of love when its needs are not met.

What this looks like in practical terms is the partner who holds the other responsible for his/her happiness. He really wants to play golf, but instead of wanting him to be happy, she pouts, gives him the silent treatment or otherwise makes him feel guilty. He either stays home and is miserable and resentful or goes anyway, carrying guilt along with his clubs. Neither one of them ends up happy.

She signs up for a yoga class because she needs to de-stress and the time to herself will feel good. Rather than encouraging her to tune into her needs and validating the importance of self-care, he is resentful because he thinks she should be home with him in the evenings. She goes to class but can't really relax because she keeps thinking of the grumpy greeting she will get later.

Ego often twists and distorts love in the realm of parenting as well. If ego gets caught up in feeling the child is a reflection of the parent, the child is not free to be his or her natural self. Ego sees a child as a blank canvas upon which to create the image it would like to see. What emerges is a constant power struggle between ego's will to shape the child and the child's tendency towards individuation and creative evolution. Sadly, the child often gives up the fight because the child's ego cannot tolerate withdrawal of love. The child, therefore, lives a life that is not his or her own.

Another compulsion of ego is to have the child meet its emotional needs. This can manifest as hurt feelings when the toddler wants Mommy to read the story, not Daddy. Later, it shows up as resentment when the teen would rather go out with friends than spend time with Mom. Regardless of age, the child feels the parent's displeasure and feels guilty for not pleasing the parent. This is the beginning of the pattern of living life according to what others think, rather than expressing one's authentic self.

Clearly, for ego love is as much, if not more, about meeting ego's needs as it is about fulfilling the needs of the other. Ego will even go so far as to say, "If you loved me, you would do things my way."

When we connect with our higher soul selves and see the souls of others, the quality and experience of love becomes quite different. To love another is to want what is in their highest good. It is to treasure the fact that our two souls have connected in this lifetime and to honour that connection. It is to realize the primacy of that connection and to see that the particular roles we play – husband/wife, child/parent – are secondary. We must not get so caught up in the ego drama that we forget each soul has its own journey, which we are blessed to share, support and respect.

Gwen Randall-Young is a psychotherapist in private practice and author of Growing Into Soul: The Next Step in Human Evolution. *For articles and information about her books and "Deep Powerful Change" personal growth/hypnosis CDs, visit www.gwen.ca*

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Eat the Light

The fourth age of solar is on the way…

by Geoff Olson

In a 2000 interview on CBC Radio's *Ideas*, ethnobotanist Wade Davis recalled a "horrific book that came out called *The Secret Life of Plants*." One of Davis' plant-gathering colleagues, Tim Ploughman, was "infuriated" with the book's thesis that houseplants respond emotionally to human voices and the music of Mozart. "I remember Tim saying to me, 'Why would a plant give a shit about Mozart?' And then he said, 'And even if it did, why should that impress us? They can eat light. Isn't that enough?'"

Whatever the merit of the slab of compressed pulp that so annoyed the two ethnobotanists, there's no denying that light-eating is a very impressive trick. In fact, it's evolution's greatest routine, the foundation for the pyramid of life. Every cell of algae and every humble weed chows down on photons, as a matter of course.

That's real magic. Let's see David Copperfield and Kris Angel sit down for a tray of rays.

Human beings may not be able to "eat light" as directly as plants do, but our fossil-fuel addicted civilization is beginning to taste the possibility of reducing its steady diet of dirty energy sources like coal, oil and nuclear. With the explosive growth of renewable energy, we are now on the cusp of the fourth age of solar (see sidebar).

Tavis Bradford, an industry analyst for The Prometheus Institute, predicts that within a short time, production of solar panels will double each year. The price per volume savings will inevitably follow, as production scales-up and becomes more efficient. The price of solar panels could drop as much as 50 percent from 2006 to 2010, Bradford adds.

According to futurist and inventor Ray Kurzweil, solar power will be the dominant form of energy source within the next 20 years. With the use of solar power doubling every two years, it is following the exponential growth of previous technologies, Kurzweil says. The futurist has seen similar kinds of patterns in the past and has correctly predicted the outcomes. He foresaw the explosive growth of the Internet and wireless systems and also predicted the downfall of the Soviet Union.

With wind factored in, the possibilities are even sunnier. The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Washington – one of the U.S. Department of Energy's 10 national laboratories – estimates that, as wind power drops to competitive levels, it could quickly supply 20 percent of the US' electrical needs. With the proper infrastructure implemented, some researchers put the figure at 30 percent. (For the purposes of this article, I include wind power as a subset of solar power because the sun's electromagnetic energy is the prime driver of the atmosphere's thermal engine.)

The pace of research is tracking the pace of production. It seems that a week can't pass without another technical or market breakthrough. Passive solar heating, solar ovens, solar-powered trash compactors, solar-powered UV water treatment, hyper-efficient LED lights and building-integrated photovoltaics – the present state of the art has dizzying possibilities for social change, even without the projected technical advances and plunging costs.

The entry of big players like Wal-Mart into solar power indicates energy security is as much of an issue as good business practice. Corporations aren't going to wait to take their cue from the Jurassic oil dynasty counting out its last few months in the White House. Geneticist and entrepreneur Joel Bellenson points out that the founder of Wal-Mart has invested $250M in First Solar, which now has a market capitalization larger than GM and Ford combined. The founders of Google funded NanoSolar, which just shipped solar panels at $1/W, making it cheaper than coal. And while General Electric is losing its appliance division, it's going big time into renewable energy via wind and LED lighting.

Other big players include Phillips, Sharp Electronics, Boeing, Peterbilt, Intel, Hewlitt-Packard and IBM.

"Silicon Valley/Stanford on one coast and MIT on the other coast are driving solar advancements at breakneck speed," Bellenson notes in an email exchange. "Clearly, the principal countries and their industrial capitalists in the EU are hell bent to switch to renewables. The United Kingdom plans to get all of their residential electricity from wind by 2020."

The game has gone global and North America is playing catch-up. Germany and Denmark are far ahead of us in working renewable technology into their infrastructure. One of the largest wind companies, India-based Suzlon, is going gangbusters; China-based SunTech, one of the largest solar panel companies, is doing the same. At current rates of production, the solar industry worldwide will be producing enough solar panels in 2009 to power nine Vancouvers, Bellenson claims.

Nonetheless, there have been two persistent bugaboos of solar power: it doesn't work when the sun goes down and storing power is expensive. This is why solar still supplies only a small percentage of the world's electricity. Off-the-shelf batteries are still too big and expensive to compete with other options. In comparison, fossil or renewable fuels act as their own storage, making for ease of use and transport.

That nut may finally have been cracked, however. In August, researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) claimed to have found a radically inexpensive way to store solar power. Eoin O'Carroll described the feat in an article published in the *Christian Science Monitor*: "Daniel Nocera, a chemistry professor at MIT, and Matthew Kanan, a postdoctoral fellow in Mr. Nocera's lab, have developed a catalyst made from cobalt and phosphate that can split water into oxygen and hydrogen gas. When used in conjunction with a photovoltaic solar panel, their system can use water to store the sun's energy."

Cobalt replaces electrodes made of platinum, which is more expensive than gold, thereby reducing costs by a huge margin. Nocera describes his catalyst discovery as a solar power "Nirvana," with the inference that we can now "seriously think about solar power as unlimited and soon."

The question is not how widespread renewable power will be in our future. The question is will its reign arrive in time? With resource wars raging in the Near East, and the planet in the midst of its sixth great extinction period, one expression comes to mind: the power of now.

In a *Forbes* magazine interview, Nocera enthuses about his battery's replication of photosynthesis. "Once you put a photovoltaic on it, you've got an inorganic leaf," he says. The chem prof figures he's managed to match wits with Gaia. "For six months now, I've been looking at the leaves and saying, 'I own you guys!'"

The MIT press release includes a sanguine estimate from James Barber, a biochemist at the Imperial College London in the UK. "This is a major discovery with enormous implications for the future prosperity of humankind," Barber says. (That was so last month! As this magazine goes to press, Green Car Congress (greencongress.com) announces that Australia researchers have developed a "bio-inspired, photo-oxidizing catalyst for solar water-splitting to produce hydrogen." The researchers use manganese, as plants do – and thereby may have gone a step further in replicating photosynthesis.)

This all may sound too good to be true. Are Kurzweil's prognostications too sunny? Is Nocera's leaf-mimicry a revolutionary turn for alternative technology or just a minor riff on nature's grand banquet of light? Besides, the MIT battery still has a long way to go before market testing. And weren't there promises in the past from the press about some new technology that would liberate us all, from the rotary telephone to the Internet?

The difference this time around is that the enthusiasm isn't limited to journalists and public relations flacks. It's rare for scientists to speak in superlatives, but solar seems to have lit a fire under the thinking class.

Joel Bellenson is convinced solar will introduce massive changes into society, on a global scale. A typical conversation with the 43-year-old polymath ranges from the genetics of human scent to Big Bang cosmology to the politics of sub-Saharan Africa. It's like talking to a bipedal Library of Congress or a jovial Wikipedia. The Vancouver resident describes himself as a "serial entrepreneur at the intersection of life sciences and information technology."

Bellenson co-founded Pangea Systems/DoubleTwist, which in 1999 was the first to annotate the human genome and make it available to academics for free to prevent it from being patented by Celera. He is currently the CEO of Upstream Biosciences, which investigates new drugs for Global South infectious diseases, such as Malaria, Black Fever, Sleeping Sickness, Chagas and TB, utilizing artificial intelligence and chemical data.

The Stanford graduate relates the current thinking among solar power researchers: "Based on a mid range of 25 percent efficiency, solar panels generating 90 Terawatts of power – ~6X the planet's current energy consumption of all types: electricity, heat, transportation – would require no more than 360,000 square kilometers."

The whole planet, including the projected population growth by 2050, could be powered at North American levels for electricity, heat and transportation by sunny land smaller than the state of Montana, he says. "One hectare of sunlit land surface area, covered with a 15 level, LED-lit, hydroponic greenhouse with solar panels on top, will produce the equivalent of 150 outdoor, arable hectares of food, assuming LED and solar panel efficiencies expected within the next five to 10 years. Costs of sufficient solar panels and, most importantly, LED lights will cross over with the price of arable farm land in five years."

Bellenson isn't troubled by concerns of a shortage of wild spaces given over to solar power collectors. He believes the main impact "…will be on enabling more rational economic organization," which includes rational use of the landbase and freshwater.

Who will be the big losers in this? The big oil companies, for sure. "In general, we are already entering a period where the King CONG – coal, oil, nukes, gas – companies are nervous about investing in any step in the process, since the payback is over 20 to 30 years. They are not stupid, and see that the complete triumph of renewables will occur in about 10 to15 years, with almost 100 percent of all electricity converted over and probably 50 percent of transport to plug in hybrids by then. Even oil rich Middle East countries from Algeria to United Arab Emirates are jumping on the solar bandwagon," Bellenson states.

The geneticist notes that the primary material that goes into producing solar panels is silicon. The Earth's crust is one-quarter silicon, the seventh most abundant element in the universe. You could say the cosmos is just about screaming at the clever monkey to crank out solar panels.

It all makes for a wonderful vision of civilization turning its face to the sun. Anyone who can work an Excel spreadsheet can drag the simple formula of 45 percent compound annual growth rate for solar down 20 years of rows and see what happens, Bellenson insists. Last year, worldwide solar investment grew 92 percent. A mix of lower solar prices, higher oil prices and geopolitical tension will drive solar power further up Kurzwell's exponential growth curve.

Bellenson foresees a time when solar generates enough power that all agriculture can be brought indoors into "multilevel urban greenhouses," thus saving 90 percent of the 70 percent of the world's freshwater devoted to agriculture, while also radically reducing the amount of herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers and associated runoff.

Solar is already being produced at $1 to $1.25 a watt, and in the past few months there have been announcements noting solar panel production prices dropping to $0.40 a watt. Coal plants cost $1 to $2 a watt to build. Engineers working on quantum dots are claiming that it will cost on the order of $0.05 a watt by 2017. "In other words, it would cost $200 to build solar capacity – roof or on large solar farms – for a big single family home (4kW)," Bellenson says. "At that price, the Global South's pentup, desperate need for electricity will be able to be addressed quite easily."

Some of the sunniest places on Earth, including Africa for example, are also the places with the greatest need for electricity. Bellenson's interest in Africa and the Global South is more than academic. He recently founded the AfricaFreeMAN project to set up free wireless broadband intranets with free local telephony in metropolitan area networks. He is also involved with the Presidential Investment Roundtable of the President of Uganda, an initiative focused on biotechnology, forestry, agriculture, IT/telecom and renewable energy.

Solar power is truly empowering for the Global South, the geneticist insists: "The power source, the Sun, is plentiful and democratically distributed. No geopolitical games. No need to sell cheap labour intensive agro products on unfair global markets to purchase expensive petroleum. No ability for the oil curse to corrupt social, economic, political and military life…For those motivated to improve the environment to prevent horrors from climate change, subsidizing solar panels in Africa and other places in the Global South not only makes for a better future, but radically improves people's lives right now, far, far more than adding renewable power sources in rich countries. Affordable electricity is the core necessity of modern civilization. Without it, life is a needless nightmare of suffering."

Solar and wind have long been the bastard children of energy production, dismissed as bit players in petroleum and coal's rich pageant. There's little doubt that the oil lobby has kept alternative energy research and development on the fringe for years. But with the horses out, there is little point in trying to shut the barn door. The question is not how widespread renewable power will be in our future. The question is will its reign arrive in time? With resource wars raging in the Near East, and the planet in the midst of its sixth great extinction period, one expression comes to mind: the power of now.

Bellenson believes a transformation is already in the works, as humanity moves away from its obsessive dependency on non-renewables: "This shift will occur over the next 15 - 20 years and will be more massive than the development of agriculture itself 10,000 years ago."

www.geoffolson.com

The fourth age of solar

The story of life on Earth is ultimately about a long-term relationship between light and matter. In the first age of solar, plants evolved the capacity to transfer the electromagnetic energy of sunlight into the high-energy chemical bonds of sugars and carbohydrates.

In the second age of solar, a few hundred million years later, the monochrome, brownish-green world of the late Jurassic gave way to an explosion of colour with the emergence of the angiosperms – the flowering plants. The plants directed some of the photosynthetic energies of their green-coloured tissues into the production of lurid landing pads, alerting insects through their brilliant hues. With the symbiosis of insect pollination, evolution took a whole new direction, giving the wilderness a coat of many colours in the process. (Charles Darwin called flowers an "abominable mystery" because they appeared so suddenly, and spread so quickly, in geological time.)

The third age of solar began 10 thousand years ago, when several populations in the Near East abandoned their nomadic way of life for year-round settlements. These small settlements, the seeds of future city-states, were made possible through the use of domesticated animals and seasonal stockpiles of grain. The energy of the sun, bound up in the chemical bonds of plant carbohydrates, was deposited in silos and granaries like money in a bank. A cascade of cultural consequences followed, with institutional mechanisms for measuring, allocating and protecting the stockpiles: cuneiform script, local governance, taxation and standing armies. We are still in the third age of light, but now the vast bulk of our energy comes from fossil fuels. These fuels also began as organic material and they hold the energy of ancient sunlight in their chemical bonds.

Civilization is now on the cusp of the fourth age of solar. We now have the opportunity to abandon the unsustainable, finite resources of fossil fuels for a truly abundant, freely available form of energy. We're doing it by following the evolutionary example of the plants.



Celebrate a green future

ENVIRONMENT

EARTHFUTURE Guy Dauncey

During August, while most West Coast brains were being gently addled by the sun, beatified by BC bud or transfixed by the Olympics, a heavy-duty development pushed its way into the minds of those of us still working away on the small matter of global warming.

Professor Bob Watson, the UK government's top climate scientist and former head of the IPCC, said that we should take active steps to prepare for dangerous climate change of perhaps +4ºC because we don't know, in detail, how to limit the damage to a rise of 2ºC and we should therefore be prepared to adapt to +4ºC.

What does +4ºC mean? Here's Mark Lynas, the British author who wrote *Six Degrees*: *Our Future on a Hotter Planet*, which spells out the full, grim prospects for each degree of temperature rise, courtesy our use of fossil fuels:

"By the time global temperatures reach four degrees, much of humanity will be short of water for drinking and irrigation; glaciers in the Andes and Himalayas, which feed river systems on which tens of millions depend, will have melted and their rivers will be seasonally running dry. Whole weather systems like the Asian monsoon (which supports 2 billion people) may alter irrevocably. Deserts will have spread into Mediterranean Europe, across most of southern Africa and the western half of the United States. Higher northern latitudes will be plagued with regular flooding. Heat waves of unimaginable ferocity will sear continental landscapes; the UK would face the kind of summer temperatures found in northern Morocco today. The planet would be in the throes of a mass extinction of natural life approaching in magnitude that at the end of the Cretaceous period, 65m years ago, when more than half of global biodiversity was wiped out." (*The Guardian*, August 7)

Four degrees would also trigger the death of the Amazon rainforest, the melting of the Arctic permafrost and, according to Lynas, "…Greenland melting so rapidly that sea level rise by the end of the century will be measured in metres, not centimetres."

I hardly need to tell you – this is not a place we want to be.

Also in August, and very much to the point, a powerful coalition of 25 British NGOs launched the new website www.onehundredmonths.org, wherein they say, "We have 100 months to save the planet. When the clock stops ticking, we could be beyond the climate's 'tipping point,' the point of no return." By the time you read this, the clock will say 99 months.

And back in May, a major, international coalition of 62 NGOs launched the new website http://www.350.org, where they posted the following: "350 is the red line for human beings, the most important number on the planet. The most recent science tells us that unless we can reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million, we will cause huge and irreversible damage to the Earth." The website is up in 10 languages and has been gathering worldwide attention.

To put this in context, the current level of CO2 in Earth's atmosphere is 385 parts per million, and until recently, there had been a general consensus that 450 was the level we had to do our darndest to avoid to prevent the Earth's temperature from rising by more than 2ºC. While 350 parts per million of CO2 is lower than today's level, with every litre of gas, tonne of coal and gigajoule of gas it burns and every hamburger it eats, the world is adding, not subtracting, to the burden of CO2.

I know that a green, sustainable future is within our reach. I know that we can travel, heat our buildings, farm our land and generate electricity without fossil fuels.

What are you feeling now? Let me guess:

• You want to bury your head in a pillow and weep for the sheer hopelessness of it all.

• You are even angrier at the oil, coal and auto industries and the politicians who simper around them.

• There's no such problem, and even if there was, nuclear power or clean coal could solve it.

• If only more people would share your determination, we could change the way we live, roll out the solutions, cool the planet and create the future we dream of.

If everyone reacted with the final response, we wouldn't have a problem. We'd have the same gutsy determination that the British, Canadians and Americans had during World War II when there was no bloody way our parents and grandparents were going to allow Hitler and the Japanese to march all over us.

I have two strategies that I believe will inspire people to act on our planetary emergency. The first is designed to mobilize very pragmatic fear. It is to require, by government decree, that every town, city and region must study the impacts of not taking action on climate change and the looming "peak oil" crisis over the next 100 years, to cost them out and to publicize the results.

What will it cost to deal with temperatures rising by up to five degrees, heat waves, crop failures, no more winter snow, Lyme disease, West Nile virus and hurricane-strength storms in winter? How about the need to build a three-meter-high sea wall around Richmond, Delta, Ladner, Vancouver's waterfront (including the new conference centre, which sits *on* the sea) and the Fraser River all the way to Chilliwack? The cost would be in the multi-billions of dollars, quickly dispelling any idea that we can't afford to tackle climate change now because it might hurt the economy.

The second is designed around hope; it is for all of us climate activists, having put the negative news firmly in people's minds, to get off the doom and gloom bandwagon and paint a picture of a green, sustainable future that is so enticing and so heart-yearningly rich in music, art, community, fulfillment and green technology that people will want to celebrate it immediately. To use the World War II analogy again, with apologies for those to whom it is ancient history, we need the green, future equivalent of Dame Vera Lynn singing: "There'll be blue birds over/The white cliffs of Dover/Tomorrow, just you wait and see." (Hear it at www.tinyurl.com/6kz3vo)

I know that a green, sustainable future is within our reach. I know that we can travel, heat our buildings, farm our land and generate electricity without fossil fuels and live in a totally civilized manner, with more community, more democracy, more local greenery, and without poverty or homelessness. I know that this and so much more is possible, not just in my head, where I've got all the analysis and numbers to prove it (except the stats for flying), but also in my heart, because I believe so deeply in our human possibility.

The emphatic message is "Don't give up." Don't hang with the cynics, the angry-hearted, the whiners, the blamers, the negative minded. Hang with those who believe in love, hope and beauty and then work with them to make this a reality. This is our planet. This is our time. This is our call to action.

Guy Dauncey is president of the BC Sustainable Energy Association (www.bcsea.org) and editor of EcoNews. *He lives in Victoria. www.earthfuture.com*

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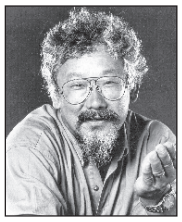
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SCIENCE MATTERS David Suzuki with Faisal Moola

Are Canadian politicians finally paying serious attention to the environment? Recent events give us reason for optimism. On August 1, we wrote about the federal Sustainable Development Act and how all the political parties put aside their differences to support this important, new law. We've also seen a lot of progress lately on the part of some provincial governments regarding global warming. The Ontario government's recent commitment to protect 50 percent of its intact boreal forest offers further hope that governments are getting serious about protecting the planet.

On July 14, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty committed to preserving 225,000 sq km of northern boreal forest, under the province's Far North Planning Initiative. That's an area one and a half times the size of the Maritime Provinces! It's a significant commitment and it's something more than 1,500 of the world's scientists had asked for, including us.

The boreal forest stretches across the northern part of Canada, covering 35 percent of the country's total land mass. It represents about one third of the world's circumpolar boreal system and one quarter of all intact forests remaining on the planet. The region supports three billion migratory songbirds and more than 200 species of animals, including dozens of threatened or endangered species such as woodland caribou, grizzly and polar bears, wolverine, lynx and white pelican.

Ontario's northern boreal region makes up 43 percent of the province's land mass. Under the plan, half of this massive region would be protected in an interconnected network of conservation lands.

The announcement is significant not just in terms of conservation but also because it marks the first time a government in Canada has explicitly recognized the role that nature conservation must play in combating global warming. The boreal's forests and peatlands absorb and store massive amounts of carbon, making them a hedge against global warming caused by emissions from human activity. Scientists estimate that Ontario's northern boreal alone absorbs 12.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions a year.

It's difficult to describe the global significance of Canada's boreal forest. It's one of the last places on earth where human activity hasn't yet upset critical predator-prey relationships, natural fire regimes and hydrological cycles. And economists conservatively estimate that the ecosystem services provided by the boreal, such as water filtration, pollination, and carbon storage, have 2.5 times the economic value of market resources extracted each year, such as oil, minerals and timber.

As significant as the Ontario government's announcement is, we have to be cautious in our optimism. For one thing, we don't know if protecting 50 percent will be enough to conserve the region's biodiversity. And we have yet to learn what areas will be put off-limits to development. Fortunately, the government has committed to working with First Nations in the region to develop comprehensive land-use plans.

We must also ensure that the government doesn't use its announcement to protect the sparsely populated and largely unthreatened northern boreal as justification for further expansion of industrial development in the southern boreal, which is far more attractive to industries such as forestry and mining.

On July 14, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty committed to preserve 225,000 square kilometres of northern boreal forest

The areas not slated for protection under this plan – in both the northern and southern boreal – must be managed in a sustainable way based on sound scientific principles. And the government should reverse its recent decision to give the forest industry a one-year exemption from new habitat-protection regulations under the province's Endangered Species Act.

Still, with this announcement, Ontario has taken an important and courageous step, one that we hope other provinces will follow. For example, Quebec has protected less than five percent of its own boreal forest, and although it has plans to increase this, it has yet to make a commitment as visionary as Ontario's.

The recent attention governments have been paying to the environment is a positive sign. But successful conservation efforts can't be limited to aspirational goals announced at news conferences. We all have a responsibility to make sure governments live up to their commitments.

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Bring back the Salmon

by Celia Brauer



Salmon Song 1 **by Celia Brauer**

I will never forget my first encounter with "real" salmon. It was the late '70s and I had just begun a new life in Victoria. Summer turned to fall and the locals were suddenly discussing the return of the salmon to the local streams. As an urban easterner, I was accustomed to getting my salmon from a tin can, not a stream, and local fish were never the subject of casual discussion.

That year, I was to discover what every native west coaster already knows – that the return of these iconic fish draws people from all walks of life to gaze in wonder at their remarkable, annual homecoming.

When I finally viewed the spectacle for myself at Goldstream Park one grey Sunday afternoon, I was not at all prepared. A wide and shallow stream snaked between monstrous evergreens, which had started as seedlings during the Middle Ages. Hordes of people with their kids and dogs swarmed the banks gawking at the water where great numbers of huge, grey, embattled fish flapped pitifully. A few were making an attempt to move upstream and some had already died. This was a far cry from the tasty, orange meat of the lunchtime sandwiches of my youth.

Up to that point, I had not been a particularly fishy person. My dad had grown up near the Baltic Sea and enjoyed smoked fish from the local deli, and my mom cooked some delicious ethnic fish dishes. But beyond that, I had little connection to the sea. Salmon, however, have a way of touching us with their river-to-ocean life cycle and epic return home. I was very moved by my first connection with those half-alive salmon at Goldstream Park, but little did I know it was to be the first of many encounters with this fascinating fish, and that many years later I would start hearing the voices of the salmon from the lost streams of Vancouver in my mind.

Thus began my "real" education into the hook-nose *Oncorhynchus*. I quickly learned that salmon's biggest foes were not ocean predators or their own month-long, upstream journey with no food. It was *Homo sapiens* – king of the resource deplete-ors. As with many of the planet's wild animals, the history of humans' actions against these defenseless creatures has not been pretty. By the second half of the 1800's, the industrial economy had marched across most of North America. Reaching the Pacific Ocean, it very seriously set about laying waste to its tremendous edible bounty. Salmon were a simple catch; all the fishers had to do was grab thousands of fish as they entered the mouths of rivers on their return home.

The pristine wilderness of the coast that had been carefully stewarded by the First Nations for thousands of years was now under the rule of the conquering Europeans, who had a very different set of values. Their worldview originated in an expanding industrial economy where the focus was on material wealth and technological progress. They saw nature as inhospitable, something to be tamed. The idea that healthy ecosystems are the foundation of our economy –"natural capital" – was not considered. The many species of Pacific salmon endured a raft of onslaughts and machines offered a remarkably efficient way to travel and "harvest" millions of fish. There were tales in the 1850's of the Fraser River smelling very foul as fishermen threw back thousands of sockeye from their massive catches because they favoured the "spring" salmon. This is hard to believe today, as we watch in despair as the sockeye numbers continue to fall.

As more people settled the rich land where streams once flourished, these waterways disappeared one by one, and along with them, their resident fish. The lands occupied by present day Vancouver lost close to 57 salmon streams in less than 50 years. Over time, the remaining streams and rivers became more polluted – first with industrial waste and later with agricultural runoff, sewage, pesticides and other pollutants manufactured by the thousands of humans that occupied the land. In order to prop up an ailing fishery, the governments first set up hatcheries and later, fish farms. Both of these "fix-it" schemes have had mixed results and brought more than their share of illness and fatalities for wild fish while climate change has shrunk and warmed the streams.

In the days before clearcutting and over-fishing, the land breathed with wildlife. Beginning in late summer and extending into the fall, the salmon rivers on the West Coast of North America were packed with returning, adult salmon spawners. The Fraser River, as the largest fresh waterway of them all, drew billions of fish home. In his book, *Salmon Without Rivers*, Jim Likatowich says that the Pacific salmon appeared on the coast approximately 5,000 years ago and quickly became a rich food staple for the First Nations, who worked out a logical method of ownership of fishing territories by dividing the riverbanks among families. In this way, each family had a

clear vested interest in the health of the stream and the resident fish. In essence, they were the stewards of the streams and caretakers of Mother Earth and her creatures. Ceremonies marked the arrival of the first spawners and legends about the salmon people were told around the fires in the winter houses and at potlatches. People also respected the rules and regulations about how to treat the salmon and the water during the different seasons, and anyone who broke those rules was punished by the community. This was the salmon "protocol."

While this remarkable fish still remains a treasured, wild icon for many on the West Coast, our relationship with salmon bears little, if any, resemblance to that of First Nations tribes. A small number of us fish recreationally and some of us buy fresh fish at a local market. For the majority of us however, our first encounter with salmon is as a cut slab, shrink-wrapped on a styrofoam tray at the supermarket. We still enjoy eating salmon, but the experience of stewarding the fish, caring for the land and paying attention to changes in salmon habitat is all but lost.

Around 2004, I started thinking more about the lost streams of Vancouver. It was as if I were hearing the spirits of the fish that used to live there. I didn't know why this was happening, but it shouldn't have been a total surprise. The human body is compromised of 70 percent seawater so how could one not feel the ebb and flow of the creatures of the salt water if one really listened? At the time, local historians and artists like Bruce Macdonald, Terry Glavin and Karen Jameson

were writing, talking and even dancing about the lost streams. Over time, I learned about the mighty Fraser River from local teachers like Fin Donnelly, Terry Slack and Stephen Hume. I heard stories from the First Nations about how salmon was respected in their culture and how they stewarded their home streams where they were born and died.

It seemed obvious to me that salmon were no longer a part of our daily lives as they were for the First Nations. And this was clearly why salmon were disappearing. They were no longer part of our culture. We hardly ever visited their environment. They no longer lived in our neighbourhoods so it was inevitable that they would slowly vanish from our hearts and minds. Yes, they have a place in our government systems – in the Department of Fisheries, the Ministry of the Environment and in Parks and Recreation – but the relationship is strained and confused. Our political systems are crude tools for determining the common good of fish and wildlife. After all, fish don't vote. Nor do they merit a seat at our bargaining tables. Ecosystems and animals in peril have to rely on a small, but growing, body of activists who lobby on their behalf.

While salmon numbers decreased radically in the past, they continue to be under siege today. Populations shrink as the remaining ecosystems disappear to make way for more developments and megaprojects. Pollution is more insidious as untreated toxins infiltrate the remaining waterways through inadequately treated wastewater and farm and urban runoff. Diseases from fish farms pose a strong threat to fish fry; escapees interbreed with wild fish and there is a continued warming of waters from global climate change. The activists tire themselves out, collecting data, creating events and writing petitions. And still our government and much of the public think the fisheries are "managed" just fine. But how can things be different when our worldview still values a dead fish over a live one?

When asked what sustainability meant, I once heard a Carrier Sekani elder say without hesitation that it was the "potlatch." We have no system that equates with the potlatch in our communities. We have individual drive and will and democratically elected governments. But this does little to save or steward our natural ecosystems. We must return to a more efficient model of conservation – one that involves the community and the governments. A group in Oregon has coined the term "Salmon Nation," and as more people join that tribe, we will be healthier because what's good for the salmon is good for us. It will mean more clean, wild ecosystems – non-polluted rivers, a cooler planet and more thoughtful humans with smaller footprints.

In 2004, I created a BC Rivers Day event in Vancouver called the Salmon Celebration. It originated from a wish to honour the memory of the lost salmon streams and return to them the spirit of the salmon. For one afternoon at year, I wanted to put salmon back into our lives and our ceremonies and remove them from government departments where they are "managed." It's a small gesture that takes many months of preparation, but it's the least I can do for this magnificent creature that has offered us sustenance for so many years. Salmon will flourish once again on the coast when we transform our philosophy about where these creatures belong in our world order. They don't just belong on our dinner table; they should occupy a place of reverence and honour in our society.

It won't be easy to turn the ship around and bring the salmon back into our hearts and minds. But more understanding of what the wild world means for the health of our communities will certainly help to return this amazing and humble creature into more of our wild rivers where they belong.

Celia Brauer is a writer, artist and a tireless advocate for salmon. She lives in Vancouver.

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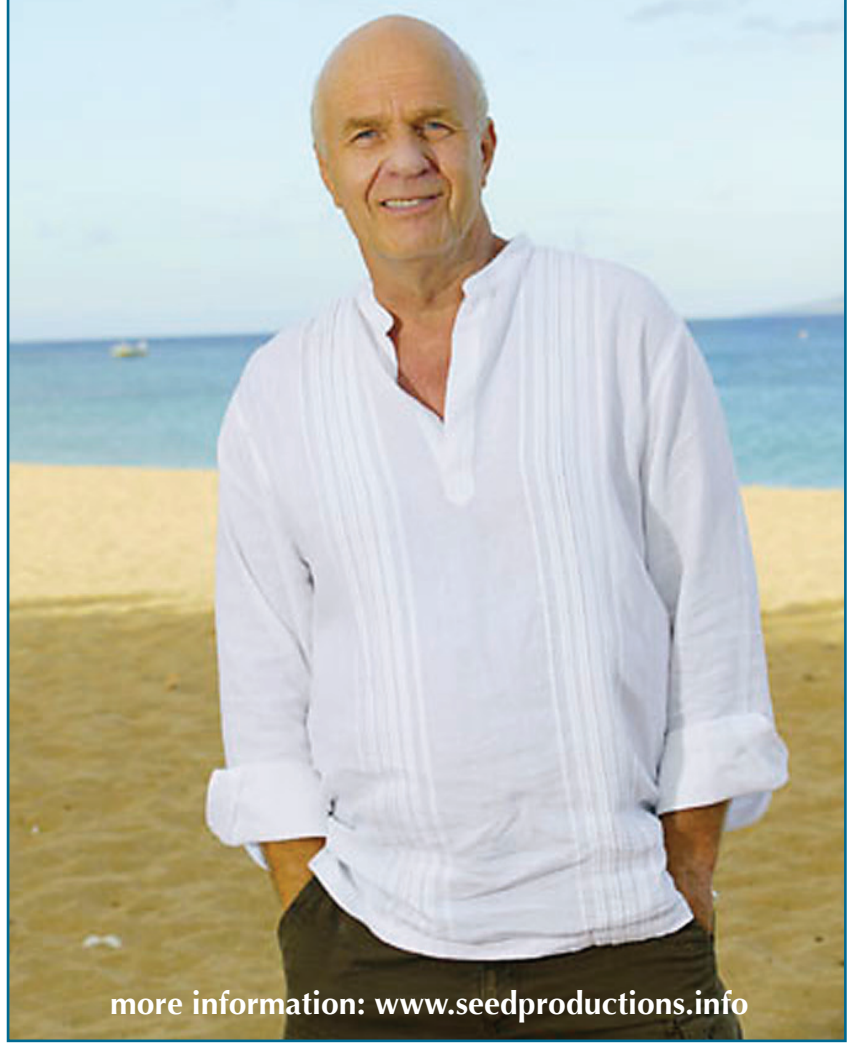
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SECRECY

(USA, 85 min.)

Ex-CIA spooks, investigative journalists and military lawyers pose lucid, cogently argued statements about the need for government secrecy versus the importance of freedom and knowledge in Peter Galison and Robb Moss' documentary. The complexity of the issues at stake is given a fair and balanced approach that is as intelligent as it is worrying. **<SECRY>**



The Fallen: A Silent Collapse
Los Caidos (Mexico, 85 min.)

When 63 miners were killed at the Pasta de Conchos coal mine in Mexico, their deaths were only the beginning of an appalling story of corporate corruption and government collusion. Director Rudy Joffroy recreates the disaster and its aftermath, including a deadly strike, through interviews with the people who lived through it. **<FALLE>**



Fierce Light: When Spirit Meets Action
(Canada, 95 min.)

Referred to as "soul force" by Gandhi and "love in action" by Martin Luther King, Velcrow Ripper (*Scared Sacred*) examines the roots of spiritual activism, with insight from spiritual luminaries Thich Nhat Hahn and Desmond Tutu, and activists, including Alice Walker, Julia Butterfly Hill and Daryl Hannah. **<FIERC>**



Blue Gold: World Water Wars
(USA/Canada, 94 min.)

Maude Barlow's call to arms *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, forms the basis for Sam Bozzo's incendiary film that travels the world and makes explicit the connection between water and power. The most essential and densely informational of the several recent impassioned films about the imperilled future of man due to our mishandling of the world's most precious element. **<BLUEG>**



Throw Down Your Heart
(USA, 97 min.)

This Buena Vista Social Club of African music features virtuoso banjo player Béla Fleck's journey to Uganda, Tanzania, Gambia and Mali to jam with superb musicians in their village settings. In Sascha Paladino's delightful film, the phrase "dueling banjos" doesn't even begin to sum up the pure joy of watching these musicians in action. **<THRHE>**



Addicted to Plastic! The Rise and Demise of a Modern Miracle
(Canada, 76 min.)

Ian Connacher's doc is a thorough—and thoroughly worrying—look at the presence of plastic in our world. Alarming and enlightening in equal measure, the film hops from factories and landfills to India and the Pacific Ocean and back in search of facts, figures and, most importantly, solutions. **<ADDIC>**

How 9/11 taught me to seek truth

by Drew Noftle

In 2005, I was living a luxurious life in Beijing, China, as the private English teacher for Yang Kaisheng, then President of the Industrial Commercial Bank of China, the largest bank in the world. I was also a corporate trainer for various multinational corporations. Like many people, I believed 9/11 was about America getting its just desserts for decades of failed foreign policy.

At that time, my roommate frequently listened to the *Alex Jones Show*, a nationally syndicated news/talk radio show based out of Austin, Texas. I remember often coming home to hear Jones, with his thick Texan accent, telling his listeners how he thought the world was run. To me, his ideology seemed radical and baseless until my roommate pleaded with me to sit down and watch one of his films. I said I had neither the time nor the desire to watch a full film, but that I would give him five minutes of my sincere attention. During those five minutes, he played a clip from *Martial Law* where I saw the collapse of 7 WTC. At first, I thought it wasn't real. Then I thought if it was real how could I have not seen it on TV even once in the last four years? How could a building blow itself up? After six months of personal research, I still didn't have many answers, but I had some. The answers I did find led me to join the 9/11 Truth Movement in Canada and inspired me to step onto a path of self-discovery and social awareness.

9/11 brought Canadian troops into Afghanistan and delivered Canadian material support to the war in Iraq. In fact, it is, as Stephen Harper reminded us on September 11, 2007, our sole reason for participation in the War on Terror. "And that is why the countries of the United Nations … launched their mission in Afghanistan – to deal with the source of the 9/11 terror."

However, what Harper did not mention is that we only did so because then Secretary of State Colin Powel promised us a white paper linking Osama Bin Laden (OBL) to the attacks. That white paper never materialized.

More recently, on August 19 of this year, Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day sent me a letter in which he stated, "The Canadian Government has no cause to believe the destruction of the World Trade Center was due to reasons other than those cited in the … 9/11 Commission Report."

No cause to believe? How about the following?

Some of the alleged "suicide hijackers" are still alive and well.

Fire has never – either before or after 9/11 – caused a steel-framed structure to collapse, let alone at free-fall speed.

Squibs, such as those you would see in a controlled demolition, were caught on tape during the collapse of all three towers.

In January of 2008, 9/11 Commissioners Kean and Hamilton stated, "We had no way of evaluating the credibility of detainee information…" adding they were "stonewalled by the C.I.A."

To this day, the FBI does not accuse OBL of the attacks. The collapse of 7 WTC was not even mentioned in the 9/11 Commission Report.

Furthermore, why was not one official or civil servant fired for their actions that day? Was no one negligent? Why were 70 percent of the victims' family members' questions not answered by the 9/11 Commissioners?

I, for one, no longer delve into where to place blame for the events of September 11. My reasons for participating in Canadian 9/11 Truth are no longer about putting Bush, Cheney or Osama Bin Laden in jail. Nor is it about justice for the victims. It is about seeing the world once and for all for what it really is. It is about realizing how we are lied to by our government and by corporate journalism, and how we accept those lies. It is about seeking truth in all we do, and learning the importance of educating ourselves, for ourselves.

9/11 Truth is about steering away from our more than 2,000-year-old cycle of non-stop war, and moving instead into a world based on truth, peace and tolerance. These are the truths for which I gave up my life in China and these are the truths the 9/11 Truth movement is founded upon and guides us toward.

Drew Noftle will be in Ottawa this September 11 to build support for a Canadian investigation into 9/11. He is currently working as a teacher in Yaletown. onehistory@gmail.com More info: vancouver911truth.org

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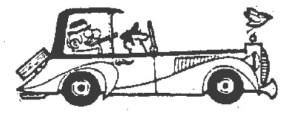
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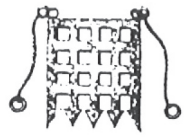
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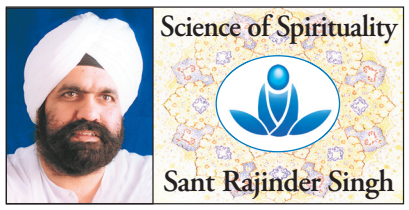
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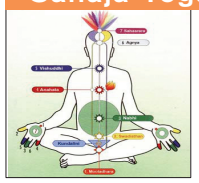
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Among the 100 or so documentaries at this year's Vancouver International Film Festival (September 25-October 10) is the first-rate *Secrecy*. The film looks at how, under the auspices of national security, US state secrecy has expanded to the point where it has undermined the democratic process and is hollowing out constitutional freedoms.

Marshalling a high-calibre line-up of interviewees from myriad backgrounds, including government, military, CIA and academia, Peter Galison and Rob Moss tackle this multi-headed and opaque subject with equanimity and balance. Poignant interviews with relatives from a landmark case that occurred over a half-century ago place state secrecy within its historical context, with commentators explaining why the "need-to-know" system of the Cold War is less secure today than an open system where information is more freely distributed. The intelligence failure of 9/11, where compartmentalized intelligence services couldn't see the full picture, is contrasted with the breakthrough that followed the Unabomber's screeds being published in the media. Information is power, but which information should be shared and with whom? And who should decide what should be kept secret?

Former CIA chief in Jerusalem, Melissa Boyle Mahle, icily suggests that secrecy is needed to shield people from things they wouldn't normally condone. In contrast, we have Lieutenant Commander Charles Swift's account of how his defence of Osama Bin Ladin's driver led him to challenge the legitimacy of Bush's military tribunals. Swift's chronicle offers some much needed hope for the necessary checks and balances of the executive's excessive use of the State's secret card.

Apology of an Economic Hitman is thematically similar, although less effective. At the centre of the film is the self-titled "economic hitman" John Perkins, who claims his job was to advance US economic interests in Ecuador through bribery and extortion. The thrust of Stelios Kouloglou's documentary rings true: the US got what it wanted by yoking South American countries with insurmountable debt burdens, and when economics failed, covert CIA operations came into play. Unfortunately, the film is undermined by over-sensationalized *film noir* recreations and thinly substantiated accusations.

In *The Lie of the Land*, British director Molly Dineen paints a raw, warts'n'all view of conditions for small and struggling English livestock farmers. It's not pretty. Farming in Britain has been left reeling after a succession of crises – diseases like "mad cow" and "foot and mouth" and "bird flu" – and for those farmers who have not cashed in their land for property, financial pressures have created a tough, new reality. Two of Dineen's subjects are shown routinely shooting new calves because there is no market for them. "We were not brought up to shoot healthy animals," one farmer says unhappily. The farmers blame government and poorly regulated factory farms. The ban imposed on fox hunting with hounds is seen as another attack on "traditional," rural life. True perhaps, but there's no comment in the film from anyone who might challenge this one-sided picture.

In *Addicted to Plastic: The Rise and Demise of a Modern Miracle*, Ian Connacher goes in search of plastic and finds it everywhere: sucked into an oceanic vortex, in a seagull's gullet, festering in Indian landfills and strewn across Hawaiian beaches. In spite of dire conclusions about how we are poisoning ourselves and our planet, this first-person, fun videolog offers encouraging examples of how entrepreneurs are recycling the plastic mountain. The doc flits quickly through its subject matter, so if you're wondering, for example, how safe compost made purely from garbage waste is you'll have to do your own research.

Finally, among the fiction films on my must-see list is Mike Leigh's latest *Happy-Go-Lucky*, which was praised on its UK release as a wonderfully optimistic character study of a young, London teacher. More next month.

Robert Alstead made the Vancouver-set documentary You Never Bike Alone. *http://icycle.bravenewtheaters.com*

...Taste of Health continued from p. 12

2004: Carol Adams, author of *The Sexual Politics of Meat*

"People who eat animals are benefiting from a dominant/subordinate relationship, but our culture encourages invisibility of the structures enabling this, and invisibility of the animals hurt by this."

In 1974, while walking to Harvard Square and thinking about all the vegetarian feminists of the nineteenth century, Carol Adams, a newly minted vegetarian, had the sudden insight that feminist politics and vegetarianism were connected. Her book, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, published in 1990, arose from that revelation.

2005: Dr. Colin Campbell, author of *The China Study*

"As a taxpayer who foots the bill for research and health policy in America, you deserve to know that many of the common notions you have been told about food, health and disease are wrong."

The idea of consuming a plant-based diet is coming of age and the scientific evidence is convincing. Not only can this diet prevent a high proportion of chronic degenerative diseases, it is now known that this same diet also cures these diseases. In addition, environmental problems can be greatly alleviated and the cost of health care substantially reduced. It is time that government informs the public about these profound benefits.

2006: Howard Lyman, author of *Mad Cowboy*

"As a fourth-generation family farmer in Montana for almost 40 years, I speak from a background of personal experience when I say that chemically based agricultural production methods today are unsustainable, and therefore ecologically disastrous."

In 1996, former cattle rancher turned vegetarian and food safety activist Howard F. Lyman revealed to a national TV audience how the cattle industry potentially exposed Americans to Mad Cow Disease by feeding cows the remains of live animals, including other cows. His remarks resulted in his being named a co-defendant with Oprah Winfrey in the infamous "veggie libel" case. We are thrilled to welcome him again this year.

2007: Dr. Jonathan Balcombe, author of *Pleasurable Kingdom: Animals and the Nature of Feeling Good*

"Animals cherish their lives as we do, and our pleasure at their expense is a poor equation for life. We can do so much better."

Biologist and author Jonathan Balcombe applies his expertise in animal behaviour towards changing the public's perception of animals. As a writer and lecturer, he illuminates the chasm between what we now know about animals' rich experiences of life and our current treatment of them. Respecting them is as important to our future as it is to theirs.

2008: Dr. David Pimentel, leading food sustainability expert

"We could reduce the fossil energy used in the U.S. food system by about 50 percent with relatively simple changes… Switching to a vegetarian diet would require one-third less fossil fuel than producing the current animal-based American diet."

Learn how at Earthsave Canada's Taste of Health event. With the awakening interest in the environmental consequences of our food choices, we are very excited to host former US Presidential Advisor David Pimentel, the world's foremost expert on food sustainability and biofuels.

email: datebook@commonground.ca

Datebook







SEPT 6 – 7
Become a Certified Coach Practitioner in our comprehensive and popular two day training + continuous education program. www.certifiedcoachesfederation.com. 1-866-455-2155 or 1-866-944-6336. Next Vancouver training, November.

SEPT 9
Eliza Mada Dalian, author of In Search of the Miraculous: Healing into Consciousness. Meet the author. 7pm – 9pm Central Library, 350 W. Georgia St. Alice MacKay room. See ad pg. 13 in August Common Ground. Free. 604-331-4044

SEPT 11
March on Ottawa for 9/11 Truth: Canadians will march to Ottawa to deliver a petition to our Parliament demanding a new Canadian investigation into 9/11. This year, we demand the truth. www.marchonottawa2008.org

SEPT 13
Core Belief Engineering Doorway to Success Great Value! Learn and experience CBE. One day of theory and exercises; one day of private personal transformation. 604-536-7402

Shamanic Drumming & Dreaming Circle: 7-10pm. Introduction for personal experience of insight/healing from your Nature Spirit Totem guardians. At Vancouver Multi-Cultural Society, 1254, W. 7th. By donation. Earthsong Healing Circles. 604-418-9636, www.shamanichealing.info

SEPT 14
Benjamin Creme, author and esotericist, talks about the emergence of Maitreya, the World Teacher. Video presentation 3 pm, YWCA Hotel, 733 Beatty St., Vancouver. See display ad pg. 14 this issue.

The Vancouver Story Slam: Cafe Deux Soleils, 2096 Commercial Drive. 2nd & 4th Sunday monthly. Featuring eight storytellers with host Ivan Penaluna. Sign up from 7:30pm. No Door Pressure.

"Transformation of Man" series; Tape 5 of 7 with Krishnamurti-philosopher, Bohm-physicist, Shainberg-psychiatrist. 4PM, open dialogue 5:15-7:15PM, MacMillan Planetarium lounge. Donation. (Tape 6/7 Oct. 12). Information: 604-734-7774.

SEPT 17
Earthsave Readers Group Stiking at the Roots: a Practical Guide to Animal Activism Restaurant dinner meeting. readers@earthsave.ca

The Future Is Yours! We create our world - Thoughts and Feelings become Things. If - instead of reacting to life, you wish to come closer to your creator. Our Topics: Our four lower bodies, The heart flame, freedom from fear, loss, and finding the path leading to healthy vibrant life. We wholeheartedly welcome you to an introduction: Wed. Sept 17, 7:30pm, The Roundhouse 181 Rounhouse Mews (Davie & Pacific) Van. "The Brotherhood of Humanity" Modern Day Franciscans. info:(604) 298-2231, (604) 430-1882, (604) 986-5042

SEPT 20
Wolfsong Chanting Circle - Annual Autumn Equinox Celebration: 7-10pm. Participate in drumming and singing shared sacred healing chants from the Spirit of the Land. At Vancouver Multi-Cultural Society, 1254 W. 7th. By donation. Earthsong Healing Circles. 604-418-9636, www.shamanichealing.info

SEPT 21
Jog for the Bog Trail Run Fundraiser: 8AM-12 Noon, Westview Park, 6500 Westview Drive, Delta. 5k and 10k run/walk. Call 604-572-0373 Register at www.burnsbog.org/jog4thebog/.

SEPT 24 – 28
Core Belief Engineering Basic Course. Learn how to transform limiting core beliefs in this mind-expanding five-day course. Personal transformation; Practitioner Certification. 604-536-7402. www.corebelief.ca / info@corebelief.ca

SEPT 25 – OCT 10
27th Vancouver International Film Festival: Online film program guide goes live Sept. 6. Tickets: Regular/$10; Matinee/$8; Seniors/$8. Info at 604-685-0260, viff@viff.org

SEPT 26 – 28
Earthsave Canada Taste of Health Food & Lifestyle Festival 10th Anniversary: Croatian Cultural Centre, 3250 Commercial Drive. $7/day. Children 12/under free. Anniversary Gala: Fri: 6 - 9pm. Sat/Sun: 10:30am - 6pm. www.earthsave.ca

SEPT 28
"Approaching the End of Life:" A Buddhist's Perspective Dhamma FREE Talk by Ven. Yin Kit of Po Lam Buddhist Association, 2-4pm at Tung Lin Kok Yuen, 2495 Victoria Drive. 604-376-3387, www.polam.ca

Pranayama Workshop - Mary Jo Fetterly: 2-6PM, John Braithwaite Community Centre, 145 West 1st Street, North Vancouver, To register or for more information Peg Neilon 604.885.7662, peg.neilon@fatdog.com

Salmon Celebration: Remembering Our History – Celebrating the Living. Free in Vanier Park. Near the Vancouver Maritime Museum. 12pm-4:30pm. Parade begins at 1pm.

OCT 2
Free Talk: Connecting With Your Teen Thursday 7 – 8:30pm Is your relationship with your teen strained? Discover ways to connect with your teen that are healthy, positive, and respectful. Location: 41st and Fraser. FREE. RVSP Klaus@kdkcounselling.com www.kdkcounselling.com 604-786-0709

OCT 4
The Secret Journey of the Enlightened Mind - Life with Three Spiritual Giants of our Age. Free talk and book signing with author Dr. James Weldon on Saturday from 2 - 3pm at Vancouver's Public Library downtown. www.TheEnlightenedMind.com.

Yoga Month 10 City Yoga Health Festival Tour. Yoga Month's (Sept) final tour city is Vancouver on Saturday at Vancouver Public Library Downtown with many workshops, demonstration and booths plus additional workshops Oct. 5. Focused on the health benefits of yoga and to inspire a healthy lifestyle. ... see full ad this issue for details.

Oct 14 & 15
FoodMatters film two public screening followed by discussion with Q & A. **Vancouver:** Ridge Theatre, Tuesday, Oct 14, 7 pm. **Victoria:** Delta Ocean Point Hotel Ballroom, Wed, Oct 15, 7pm. Co-sponsors: Common Ground, Orthomolecular Health, CHFA, CAND, Vitamin Shop, Planet Organics, Lifestyles, Nutrition House, with special guest Dr. Abram Hoffer (at Victoria showing only).

OCT 16 – 20
Australian Bush Flower Essences Workshops Level 1-October 16th & 17th Level 2- October 18th & 19th Women's Wellbeing and Bush Essences - October 20th. Understand how emotional patterns affect your health. Contact Lori - www.ausangels.com or 1-866-477-6779

OCT 19, 20 & 21
Tantra, Yoga & Bellydance workshop for women. Rediscover, redefine & reinvigorate your divine femininity. This life-changing workshop will fill fast. www.agamayoga.ca vancouver@agamayoga.ca 778-829-9628

OCT 22 – NOV 26
Is Life With Your Teen Driving You Crazy? Join our parenting group and regain a sense of confidence, control, and connection. 6 Wednesdays, 7-9:30pm Register by October 10 and save $25! 604-786-0709 www.kdkcounselling.com klaus@kdkcounselling.com

SUNDAYS

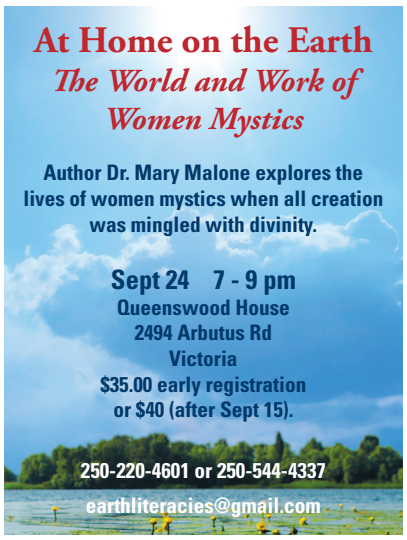
Spiritual Centre for Dynamic Living. If you enjoy Oprah's Soul Series with leading spiritual teachers, you'll feel at home in our community. Sundays 11AM - Vancouver Planetarium, 1100 Chestnut St. www.dynamiccentre.com

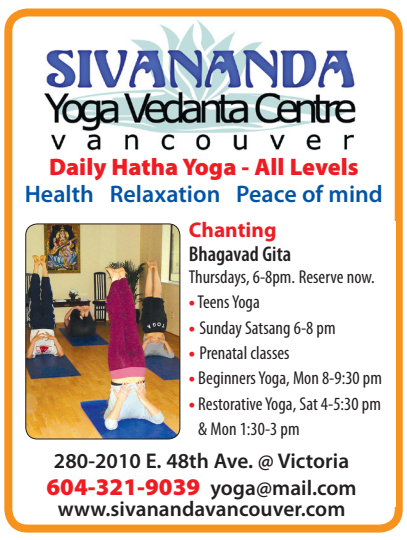
SOS (Science of Spirituality): See Resource Directory listing in Spiritual Practices for schedule in Richmond, Vancouver & Victoria. 604-277-1247. All Welcome. www.sos.org

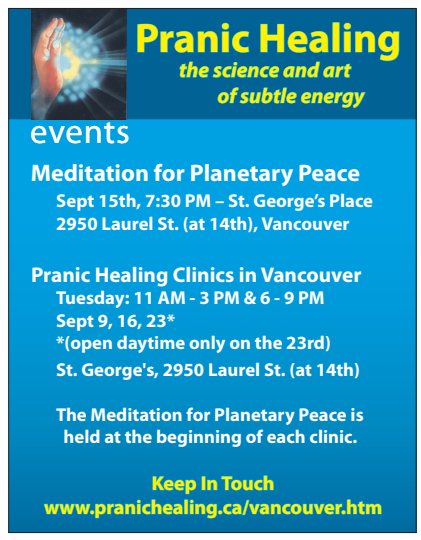
Laughter Club. Laugh as you have never laughed before and feel refreshed, invigorated, and relaxed. 3-4pm Open Door Yoga Studio, 1111 Commercial Drive Info. farah@thesmilingyogi.com

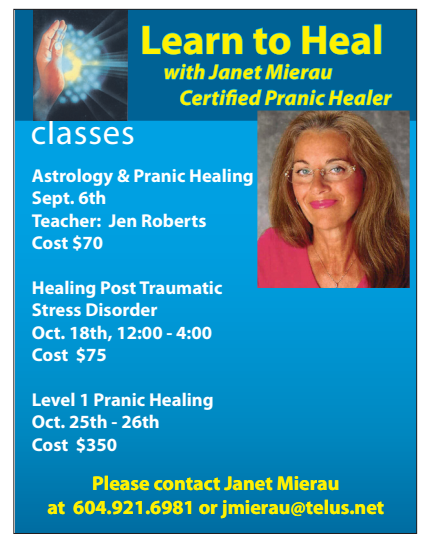
Unity of Vancouver: Empowering people to create prosperity, health and loving relationships through the practical application of spiritual principles. Sunday Services 11AM, 5840 Oak St., Vancouver (604) 266-6281.

Free, anonymous, telephone support line: Guided meditations for people suffering from chronic pain. Non-religious. Counselors have community crisis line training. 7-11pm, 604-936-5683.









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Unity In Action – The Church For Personal Growth – Dare to Prosper. Join us on Sundays at 11am. 1630 Edinburgh Street, New Westminster. 604-526-1421, www.unityinaction.ca

WEDNESDAYS

Hawaiian Medicine Circle 7pm Hawaiian guided meditation, Sharing the Aloha, tea and snacks. $10 donation. At Hale Ola, 1215 Madison Avenue, Burnaby. 604-431-7474. Call Kamu Kaimana

Unity In Action – The Church For Personal Growth Dare to Prosper Program. Starting Wednesday Sept. 10 for 10 weeks. Weekly workshops 7-9pm by donation. Focusing on proven prosperity principles. Led by Rev. Joy Young and Others. 1630 Edinburgh Street, New Westminster, 604-526-1421, www.unityinaction.ca

FRIDAYS

GIVE PEACE A CHANT! KIRTAN - the Yoga of Sacred Sound: Energize yourself with Sanskrit sound vibrations, healing mantras and call and response yoga chanting in a friendly community setting. No experience necessary. Every 2nd and 4th Friday, 7:30 pm, 2111 W. 16th Ave @ Arbutus, www.givepeaceachant.org

Just Dance! Three Fridays a month. Alcohol & smoke-free. 9pm, 2114 W. 4th Ave. @ Arbutus. $10/5. www.justdance.ca.

"Destiny Dialogues" Free Talks First Friday of each month, experiential evening that explores the interconnections between destiny and suffering, relationships, vocations, joy, teachers, character, nature, family, dreams. 7-9pm. 604-317-1613.

Inter-Spiritual Ananda Mantra Choir Sing your bliss! St. George's Place 7:30 pm 2950 Laurel St. Starts Sept. 19. Share your voice in chants and harmonies. The I AM choir is a community choir. All are welcome. David 604-685-0551 david@bluelotusmusic.com

ONGOING

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Unitarian kids believe in their ability and responsibility to make a difference in the world. Programs for kids 3 years and up, 370 Mathers St., West Vancouver, 604-926-1621, www.nsuc.ca.

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STORIES WANTED

SECOND WIND STORIES is inviting submissions for a proposed anthology about true-life love & success stories by 40-somethings. Visit www.secondwindstories.com

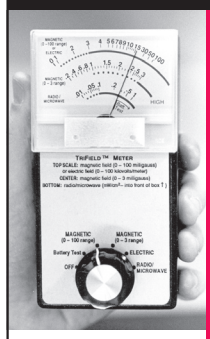
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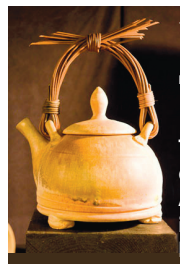
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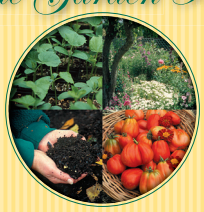
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On Track Zodiac

SEPTEMBER 2008 Adrien Dilon

ARIES (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
You may want to embark on a unique adventure. The call of the wild may be stirring along with the need to be reclusive and to recharge your emotional and mental batteries. You seem to also want to buy or create something new, bringing your finances into play.

TAURUS (Apr 20 – May 21)
Smoothness of the ride is what you're after – and relaxing in the convenience of creature comforts. You have much solace now even as things are speeding up for those around you. Being of good cheer, you may even play the Fool for a change. The Fool lives fully, with assurance, and knows he/she is graced.

GEMINI (May 22 – Jun 20)
The game of chess is a ritualized conflict accepted by society as a healthy form of competition. Remember this when the resolution you need seems arduous and extreme. While you need not volunteer personal information about yourself, playing well with others may be necessary now. Being sly may be the secret.

CANCER (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
It takes a lot of energy to look behind you when running in a marathon. If you are still looking in your rear view mirror more often than you're focusing straight ahead, you might need to stop wasting "energy" on things that pass you by and are gone.

LEO (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
You might find yourself rebuilding your business or opening a new door of expansion to broaden your possibilities. Your wish to become greater is also felt within your work and how you relate to each co-worker. You may have had the vision; practical applications now await your hand.

VIRGO (Aug 23 – Sep 22)
The effects of the larger planets are really shaking your tree. You desire change and yet long to put down roots. It might seem impossible to marry these two concepts, but they prove to illuminate and stabilize your goals. Becoming more progressive while you pioneer new undertakings is a remarkable thing.

LIBRA (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
As in art and architecture, everything has a relationship with every other thing, whether it's a circle or a line. You appear to be taking the opportunities handed to you, poised to fully express your passions and bring beauty to the forefront. Your creative principles balance the need for any competition or discord.

SCORPIO (Oct 23 – Nov 21)
The heart yearns to share what it knows in the full bloom of its wisdom. As you access your better judgment, you will decide how to create some vital pleasures within your relationships. Your intensity is clear to others and integration is key.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
The wisdom you have handed down to others now figures large in your own life. You decide to reclaim your power by taking the medicine and advice you have given others. You will again learn that your philosophies, tried and true, are remarkable.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
If you understand the adage "your issues are in your tissues," you may be aware that deep, unresolved complexities lie within your psyche. Your body desires to have a voice now to allow for improved health and the release and surrender of long forgotten fears. Broadcast your best efforts for maintaining strength and wisdom.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20 – Feb 19)
Try not to lose your marbles when gadgets and machinery don't seem to work. When things don't go according to plan, it's always good to have an alternate modus operandi. Perhaps a holiday is needed. Gently remove yourself from events and situations that may cause you to feel constricted.

PISCES (Feb 20 – Mar 20)
You notice an enhanced sense of self-esteem. You applaud yourself and have a new self-appreciation that comes from within. Moving from your centre, you are able to advance in all matters of business and pleasure with a confidence that kick-starts your dreams into reality.

Adrien Dilon is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 33 years of experience in astrology, multi-media art and healing, *adrien.dilon@gmail.com*, members.shaw.ca/adrien.dilon



Earthsave Canada's 10th Annual

TASTE *of* HEALTH Food Festival

Discover the Environmental Benefits of a Plant-Based Diet

Enlightening Speakers & Workshops · Book Fair
Cooking Demonstrations · Try-it & Buy-it Market
Wholesome Food Court · Community Tables

Sept 26-28, 2008

Croatian Cultural Centre

Friday 6pm-9pm

Try-It & Buy-It Exhibit Hall
Free Friday night only!

10th Anniversary Gala
Wine and tapas with vegan chef Isa Chandra Moskowitz, and Howard Lyman, author of *Mad Cowboy*.
Gala tickets $15 in advance.

Sat & Sun 10:30am-6pm

Admission: $7.00
Children under 12 with an adult: Free
Earthsave members: Free*
** please bring your membership card*

Speakers Include:

David Pimentel, Ph.D
World's Leading Expert On Food Sustainability

Brenda Davis, RD
Author & Speaker

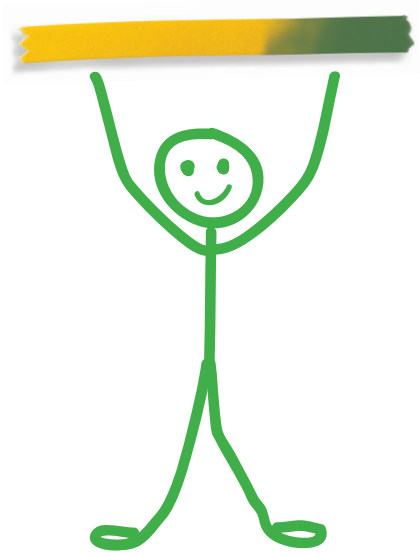
Vesanto Melina, RD
Dietitian & Nutrition Expert

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